

BERNARD P. CARVALHO, JR.
Mayor



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COUNTY OF KAUAI

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

News Release

For Immediate Release: July 3, 2013

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Complete Streets bill signed into law today

LIHU'E – A group of county officials and personnel along with community members gathered at the Līhu'e Public Library today for the signing of a landmark bill.

The Complete Streets bill, which ensures that new subdivisions are designed and constructed to support multi-model transportation circulation, was signed into law this morning by Mayor Bernard Carvalho, Jr. The bill was approved unanimously by the County Council last week.

"This is an exciting day as we take a big step forward in our efforts to design Kaua'i's streets with equal consideration given to all users, from pedestrians of all ages and abilities to bicyclists and transit riders, as well as motorists," said the mayor. "I'd like to thank all the parties involved in making this a reality, especially the County Council, Planning Department and the Get Fit Kaua'i Built Environment Task Force."

Councilwoman JoAnn Yukimura, who was among those present at the signing, said, "Talking about 'Complete Streets' is one thing. Actually taking action is another. It is exciting to be taking action and moving Kaua'i toward a safer and more walkable and bikeable community."

Also at the event was Councilman Tim Bynum.

In his remarks, Bynum said, “This represents a major shift in policy for the county. We build streets for people not just cars, including people who ride bikes or our citizens who walk or have disabilities.”

In 2010, the County Council signed a Complete Streets resolution making Kaua'i the first county in the state to change development standards for all transportation projects.

With today's signing of the Complete Streets bill, developers of residential (zoned R-4 and higher) and industrial districts are now required to install sidewalks in their projects.

If the sidewalk condition is waived by the Planning Commission due to a feasibility issue or a conflict with local context and sensitivity to community character, the developer would pay a fee towards the Sidewalk/Shared Use Path Fund in lieu of the sidewalks.

The bill also shortens the block length of new subdivisions from 1,800 feet to 450 feet to encourage connectivity. Creative sidewalk design is integrated by allowing drainage swales to be constructed in lieu of conventional curbs and gutters.

The Līhu'e Public Library was selected as the location for the ceremonial bill signing because its ongoing renovation project includes the installation of a new sidewalk along its property line fronting Hardy Street, which follows the Complete Streets bill.

Bev Brody, director of Get Fit Kaua'i, expressed excitement about the new ordinance.

“Complete Streets is about making sure our keiki can safely walk to school, seniors have time to cross the street safely, and parents feel comfortable bicycling to a nearby park or grocery store,” said Brody.

She pointed out that a comprehensive study on walkability found that residents who live in walkable neighborhoods engaged in 35 to 45 minutes more minutes of moderate intensity physical activity per week, and were substantially less likely to be overweight or obese than those who live in low-walkable neighborhoods.

“Complete Streets provides opportunities for increased physical activity by incorporating features that promote regular walking, cycling and transit use on just about every street,” said

Brody, noting that added benefits include the reduction of carbon dioxide and less time spent in traffic.

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PHOTO:

A group of county officials and personnel along with community members enthusiastically applaud as Mayor Bernard Carvalho, Jr. signs the Complete Streets bill. From left: Deputy County Engineer Lyle Tabata; Marisa Valenciano, TVR permit enforcement research specialist; Peter Nakamura, county planner; Kevin Santiago, summer intern; Marie Williams, county planner; Councilwoman JoAnn Yukimura; Neil Clendeninn, Līhu'e Business Association; Planning Director Michael Dahilig; Mayor Carvalho; Lee Steinmetz, transportation planner; Councilman Tim Bynum; Bev Brody, Get Fit Kaua'i director; Ian Jung, deputy county attorney; and Carolyn Larson, Līhu'e Public Library head librarian.

